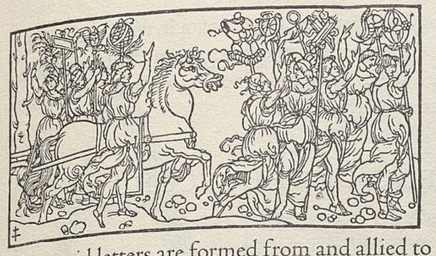
THE TRIUMPH OF APOLLO AND THE MUSES.

paire, and shall do her service and bear herself joyously and with an air befitting a great triumph. Apollo shall be seated in his chariot, playing upon his divine lyre. Behind the chariot Bacchus & Ceres shall be led captive and Venus, too, to show us that in order to triumph in letters, one must be moderate in eating & in drinking & in lusts of the flesh. All these excellent things, already described in words, shall be set forth in drawing, to the end that the unlettered, observing their disposition there, may take pleasure with the bodily eye, in order to rejoice the eye of the spirit therewith, and to spur them on to the knowledge of letters and sciences.

HEre, then, you see the great triumph of Apollo, with his Muses & other fair companions, who make manifest to the eye how, by means of letters and sciences, every man, by making good use of them, can attain to supreme honour and make his name immortal. If in this matter you should desire fuller insight, go read in the *Triumphs* of Messer Francesco Petrarca, and you will find in the 'Triumph of Renown' that the Poets, Philosophers, and Orators, through their studious zeal, albeit they long since died in the body, still live in the spirit, and will live longer than any other men, however virtuous those others may have been.

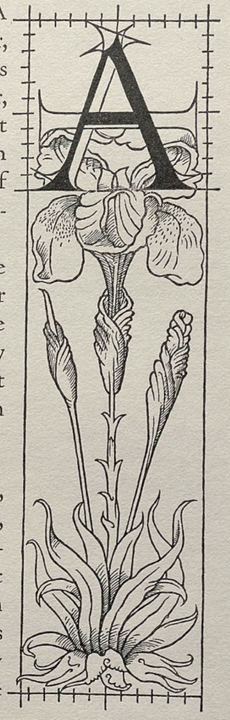
I Might also add to this, and apply by a like allegory, the shower of gold, whereinto, according to the ancient poets and philosophers, Jupiter transformed himself, to descend from heaven to earth, to the brazen tower of Acrisius, King of Greece & father of the lovely Danae.* And, too, I might write of the Mercurial herb which the Greeks call Moly,[39] whereof Homer speaks in his *Odyssey,* in the Tenth Book; but leaving those matters for good students to meditate upon, I will pass them by, and go on to fashion and describe all our Attic letters of the Alphabet, one after another, according to their common order. And to begin, with God's assistance, I remember that I have already said that

*See Ovid, 'Metamorphoses,' IV, 606.



BACCHUS CERES AND VENUS ARE HERE TAKEN CAPTIVE.

all our said letters are formed from and allied to the I and the O; and that I and A were conceived in the flower of a purple-hued lily called in Paris *lisflambe,* and which Dioscorides, and his Florentine translator, Marcellus Virgilius, called Hyacinthus, and which in vulgar Italian is called Hyacinthiol.* I have made here a drawing wherein the A is placed upon a *lisflambe* in a square; and the A is formed of the I multiplied into a triangle; or, if you would say it otherwise, say that the A is formed of three I's placed one upon another, taking of each what is needed to form a perfect A, as you can see in the said drawing, wherein I have made the A black, and what remains of the three I's I have left in white, as being superfluous for the A. The drawing is shown here.



BEhold then how, as I have said, the I is the model of the Attic letters, that is to say, for those which have straight limbs. We shall see hereafter about the O, in which we shall draw the B, which is formed from I & O, seeing that it has a straight limb, and rounded parts which mark the place of the joints.

AT this place, giving praise to our Lord God, I will make an end of our Second Book, wherein we have, according to our poor understanding, demonstrated the origin of the Attic letters, & have sought to urge and pray—which thing we do still pray—that some zealous minds may endeavour to order our French tongue by rule, to the end that we may be able to make use

*See page 24 supra.